

adoption process. I was thankful to know of the Hutcheson family's story. By working with my colleagues in the Senate, we passed the bipartisan Accuracy for Adoptees Act, which was then signed into law. Thanks in large part to the efforts of Chip and Karen, more families across the country are able to more easily navigate the rewarding yet often difficult process of bringing a child into a loving home through adoption.

Chip's unwavering dedication to his work and his community left a mark on the readers of Caldwell County. His writings not only brought the news, but he also served as a voice for people in his community by expressing the beauty and joy of western Kentucky life. After decades of hard work, Chip has earned his retirement. Along with his readers, I will miss his observations about life and current events. I would like to join with the Princeton community and all of the supporters of the Times Leader who congratulate Chip on his retirement and wish his family many relaxing and enjoyable years together. Further, I would like to ask my colleagues in the Senate to join me in commemorating Chip Hutcheson on a distinguished career in community journalism.

#### THE GLOBAL CRISIS OF KILLINGS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISTS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on July 13, Global Witness, a widely respected international nongovernmental organization that reports on corruption and other criminality involving the exploitation of natural resources, released a report entitled, "Defenders of the Earth—Global Killings of Land and Environmental Defenders in 2016."

According to the report, 2016 was the worst year yet for environmental and land rights defenders. At least 200 were killed in what has become a global crisis, pitting local communities, particularly impoverished indigenous groups, against multinational mining, logging, agribusiness, hydroelectric, and hydrocarbon companies that are often supported with foreign financing.

The report says the number of such killings is increasing, up from 185 in 2015 and spreading to new countries—24 in 2016 compared to 16 in 2015. However, because many of these attacks occur in remote areas, the actual number is likely much higher. The number of killings is also only part of the appalling story. Death threats, arbitrary arrests, sexual assaults and other forms of abuse, and misuse of the legal process are among the tactics used to try to intimidate environmental activists.

Often, when faced with peaceful resistance to the construction of dams that displace people from their homes and to logging and mining operations that destroy the forest and pollute the water, the response of the companies, backed up by local security forces, is to accuse the protestors of being "against development," try to divide them with

bribes and promises that are later broken, and eventually to silence them with force. The companies get rich and move on, local officials collect payoffs, the electricity or minerals are exported to cities or other countries, and the people whose land was destroyed or water contaminated are immeasurably worse off.

As one activist, who has for years spoken out against Latin America's largest open pit mine, told Global Witness, "[t]hey threaten you so you will shut up. I can't shut up. I can't stay silent faced with all that is happening to my people. We are fighting for our lands, for our water, for our lives."

The reports states, "[t]he battle to protect the planet is rapidly intensifying and the cost can be counted in human lives. More people in more countries are being left with no option but to take a stand against the theft of their land or the trashing of their environment. Too often they are brutally silenced by political and business elites, while the investors that bankroll them do nothing. . . . Almost 40 percent of those murdered were indigenous, as land they've inhabited for generations is stolen by companies, landowners or government officials. Projects are typically imposed on communities without their free, prior and informed consent, backed up by force: police and soldiers are suspected perpetrators in at least 43 murders. Protest is often the only option left to communities exercising their right to have a say about the use of their land and natural resources, putting them on a collision course with those seeking profit at any cost."

The report notes the criminalization of these courageous activists, including in the United States. "They are often painted as criminals, facing trumped-up criminal charges and aggressive civil cases brought by governments and companies seeking to silence them."

It is the responsibility of governments to defend the lives and rights of their citizens. Instead, too many governments are violating their own laws and aiding and abetting in these attacks and assassinations—either by the conduct of their security forces or by their failure to conduct credible investigations of these crimes and to bring those responsible to justice.

Honduran activist Berta Caceres is but one example. Instead of protecting her, the government and the company treated her like a criminal. She was killed for having the courage to defend the rights and territory of the Lenca people. In Honduras alone—a country the size of Kentucky with just 8 million people—more than 100 environmental defenders have reportedly suffered similar fates since 2009, for which no one has been convicted and punished.

I hope this report will spur governments, companies, foreign banks, and international financial institutions to take far stronger action to respect the territorial rights of affected people, to

defend freedom of speech and association, to protect the environment, and to uphold the rule of law.

#### RECOGNIZING NASA'S LANGLEY RESEARCH CENTER

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, on behalf of myself and the senior Senator from Virginia, MARK WARNER, we want to commemorate an important, early step in our Nation's emergence as a world leader in flight, space exploration, and atmospheric science.

One hundred years ago today on July 17, 1917, NASA's Langley Research Center was founded in Hampton, VA. What was once a quiet expanse of farmland and marsh on a riverbank near the Chesapeake Bay has helped transform our Nation's transportation system and the world's understanding of our universe.

That date in 1917 represents the beginning of a journey that would eventually take Americans to the moon and American technology to Mars and beyond.

Born in the days of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, the precursor to NASA, Langley was the agency's first field center and our Nation's first civilian aeronautics laboratory.

The groundbreaking and sky conquering research conducted during Langley's early days led to major advances in aeronautics and, in the years after World War I, helped our Nation cement its status as a pacesetter in flight research. Langley's important work also served as a foundation for America's burgeoning aviation industry.

Langley won the first of its seven Collier trophies, awarded for the highest achievements in aeronautics or astronautics in our Nation, in 1929. That trophy, won for development of cowling for radial air-cooled engines, honored a high level of technical excellence that Langley has maintained ever since.

Over the decades, Langley has evolved into a research center supporting all of NASA's areas of emphasis, from human space exploration to Earth science and from aeronautics to technology development.

NASA Langley's legacy of discovery and innovation is truly remarkable. Researchers at the center helped refine technologies and designs across all flight regimes—subsonic, transonic, supersonic, and hypersonic—revolutionizing the shape and performance of today's aircraft and spacecraft.

This year, we all witnessed some of NASA Langley's contributions to the space race through the lens of the Oscar-nominated film, "Hidden Figures." The film told the story of the many contributions of NASA Langley employees, especially African-American women, to the Mercury 7 mission involving America's first astronauts.

Beyond that, Neil Armstrong and other Apollo astronauts learned how to land on the moon by training at

Langley's Lunar Landing Research Facility, now known as the Landing and Impact Research Facility.

Langley led the first successful robotic landing on Mars with the Viking 1 mission, which gave humanity its first glimpse of the landscape of another world. The center's technical expertise in a field called Entry, Descent and Landing—the study of how a spacecraft can safely move through a planet's atmosphere and reach the surface—has been a key to every fully successful robotic landing on the surface of Mars.

Those are just a few highlights among many, many accomplishments.

Over the decades, NASA Langley has contributed technologies that have improved people's lives around the globe.

For example, the grooved pavement that makes our highways safer evolved from research into runway surfaces at Langley. The winglets—the upturned tips of wings seen on commercial aircraft—have saved fuel and reduced pollution for years. Their use is a result of research done by Richard Whitcomb, one of Langley's legendary aerodynamics experts.

Based on what we have seen when visiting the center, we predict this legacy of excellence and innovation will continue—even accelerate—over the next 100 years.

We have been proud to work closely with the center on improving the safe use of unmanned aerial vehicles, better known as drones.

We have also proudly partnered with the center's efforts on groundbreaking materials research, including the Advanced Composites Initiative, to work toward developing lighter, safer, and more fuel-efficient vehicles for air and space.

We have seen Langley's critical involvement in development of the Orion crew module, which was tested at Langley's Landing and Impact Research Facility to ensure that astronauts can safely splashdown in the ocean after future missions.

Langley's test facilities are being used by companies who have partnered with NASA through its Commercial Crew Program. By working with Boeing and Space X, Langley is helping to boost our Nation's growing space industry.

Other current projects include new aircraft designs intended to change the sonic boom to a sonic thud, opening the way for a revolutionary new generation of faster aircraft that will bring vast improvements for the traveling public.

When it comes to serving the public's interest, Langley's work studying the Earth's atmosphere and how it absorbs and radiates heat tops the list. It is critical that NASA's work in earth science research continues. Wise policy decisions rely on high-quality data. Without solid data, we are essentially flying blind in the area of environmental policy.

Coincidentally, the Hampton Roads area of Virginia—where Langley is lo-

cated—is second only to New Orleans in susceptibility to sea-level rise. NASA Langley is one of many national assets—including military, industrial, and academic institutions—located there. It is an important region of our Nation and Langley's work to study earth's atmosphere will safeguard Hampton Roads, as well as our planet as a whole.

When you consider exciting new capabilities offered by the center's Measurement Systems Laboratory, now under construction, and its Katherine G. Johnson Computational Research Facility, which is set to open later this year, it is clear that we can expect to see more improvements and discoveries from NASA Langley.

As Virginia's Senators, we take great pride in the fact that NASA's original field lab—sometimes called the agency "Mother Center"—resides in the great Commonwealth of Virginia. We firmly believe that the boundary-pushing spirit displayed over the last 100 years represents some of the best traits of our national character: innovation, exploration, hard work, and the quest to make life better for us all.

We look forward to seeing more amazing innovations from Langley and NASA as our Nation continues its push to solve the great problems of our age and as we extend humanity's reach ever deeper into the universe.

NASA Langley is a remarkable place—and has been for 100 years. As a center for aerospace innovation, technological discovery, and scientific inquiry, Langley continues to lead the way.

We should all cheer them on as they pass this big milestone and rocket ahead into a bold, new century.

#### DRY EYE AWARENESS MONTH

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, in the spirit of the "Decade of Vision," I am pleased to recognize July as Dry Eye Awareness Month. In 2009, while serving in the House of Representatives, I was proud to sponsor the successfully passed H. Res. 366, which recognized the 40th anniversary of the National Eye Institute and designated 2010–2020 as the "Decade of Vision." This resolution sought to bring awareness to our Nation's challenges in vision health, especially as our population ages and the incidence of chronic diseases that may cause vision impairment grows.

Dry eye is one of these growing vision health challenges that affects more than 30 million people in the United States. It occurs when the eye does not produce tears properly or they are not of the correct consistency and evaporate too quickly. It can range from discomfort to a painful chronic and progressive condition that leads to blurred vision or even vision loss. Dry eye is one of the most frequent causes of patient visits to eyecare providers. It is a particularly burdensome issue for our brave soldiers who were engaged in Operation Enduring Freedom

and Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Veterans Administration reports that upwards of 70 percent of traumatic brain injury-exposed veterans have dry eye symptoms.

Research supported by the National Institutes of Health and its National Eye Institute has improved our understanding of this condition. Dry eye can have many causes, including environmental exposure, side-effects from medications, eye surgery, eyelid disorders, immune system disorders, contact lens wear, cosmetic use, aesthetic procedures, and an increasingly common cause: staring at computer or video screens for too long without blinking, which may have a disproportionate impact on our younger generations.

I want to recognize an important educational opportunity during Dry Eye Awareness Month this year. The Tear Film & Ocular Surface Society's "Dry Eye Workshop II Report" will be published in "The Ocular Surface Journal," updating the definition of dry eye and addressing its greater impact on vision health—the first such reexamination since 2007. Report highlights were presented at a July 12, 2017, congressional briefing, accompanied by a "Test Your Tears" screening and presentation of research posters.

The vision community and its coalition partners are uniting to recognize this growing vision health problem, and I stand in support of these awareness and educational efforts.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO EMMETT CHASSANIOI, JR.

• Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to commend Emmett Chassaniol, Jr., and the Chassaniol family of Greenwood, MS, for 100 years of service and contributions to the U.S. cotton industry.

Mr. Chassaniol and his family are the subject of a profile published recently by the Delta Business Journal. The profile not only reviews a century of influence by an agricultural family in the Mississippi Delta but also the changes in the cotton industry over the decades. Mississippi remains one of the leading cotton-producing States in the country. Farmers in my State produced more than 1 million bales of cotton in 2016.

Since its founding in 1917, the Chassaniol and Company has helped producers move cotton from the farm to the marketplace. Three generations of the Chassaniol family have engaged in the business of buying, shipping, or selling cotton. I am pleased to recognize their continuous role in meeting the needs of cotton farmers in this important and challenging industry.

Today Emmett Chassaniol, Jr., continues the family cotton business established by his grandfather. Since 1996, he has expanded Chassaniol and